

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER ONLY FROM BRIZILL

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOGADISCIO 1274 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ADDIS ABABA
BONN CAIRO JIDDA KHARTOUM LONDON MOSCOW NAIROBI PARIS SANA
26 JUL 77

QUOTE

S E C R E T MOGADISCIO 1274

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT--PARA SIX)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, US, SO

SUBJECT: SIAD'S OPTIONS: STILL OPEN

REF: MOGADISCIO 1249

SUMMARY: NOTWITHSTANDING AMBASSADOR ADDOU'S CLAIMS THAT SIAD
IS DETERMINED TO END HIS SOVIET MILITARY DEPENDENCY, I BELIEVE

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THAT SIAD'S OPTIONS ARE STILL QUITE OPEN. SIAD'S SITUATION VIS-
A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION IS STILL QUITE FLUID. SITUATION IN SOMALIA
AND ETHIOPIA HAS NOT YET CRYSTALIZED TO POINT WHERE EITHER SIAD
OR SOVIETS HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO END THEIR COLLABORATION.
I REMAIN SKEPTICAL THAT EITHER BELIEVE THEIR DIFFERENCES ARE
IRRECONCILABLE. AT PRESENT TIME, SIAD IS MANEUVERING TO GIVE
HIMSELF BEST OF ALL WORLDS--EAST AND WEST AND ARAB-- AS HE SEARCHES

FOR MILITARY MEANS TO SECURE HIS WON BORDERS WHILE HE PURSUES
HIS INSURGENCY GOALS IN OGADEN.
END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ARE MY COMMENTS ON REFTEL AND THOUGHTS AS TO WHERE
SIAD PRESENTLY STANDS WITH REGARD TO SOVIETS, TO ETHIOPIA AND TO
US. I BELIEVE THEM WORTH RAISING AS WE ENTER A TIME OF TRANSITION
AND UNCERTAINTY WITH REGARD TO OUR RELATIONS WITH PRESIDENT
SIAD.

2. SIAD IS NOT INFORMED OF OUR RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST FOR ARMS
(REFTEL). ADDOU TELLS ME SIAD IS SIXTY TO SEVENTY PERCENT PERSUADED
THAT HE IS ON RIGHT POLICY COURSE IN SEEKING ALTERNATIVE TO
HIS SOVIET MILITARY DEPENDENCY. ADDOU IMPLIES HOWEVER THAT HE WILL
ONLY BE FULLY CONVINCED WHEN WEAPONS ARE IN HIS INVENTORY.
IN MEANTIME, WE CAN ASSUME SIAD WILL RETAIN HIS MILITARY TIES
WITH MOSCOW UNTIL HE FEELS SOMALIA'S MILITARY DEFENSE NEEDS ARE
FULLY GUARANTEED FROM OTHER SOURCES.
EGYPTIANS TELL US SAME THING.

3. WHAT ARE SIAD'S SECURITY NEEDS? SIAD SAYS HE WANTS SECURITY
AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF PRESENT AND FUTURE ETHIOPIAN ATTACK.
FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, SIAD AND THE SOMALI MILITARY HAVE BELIEVED
ETHIOPIAN INVASION WAS IMMINENT BECAUSE OF SUCCESSES OF WESTERN
SOMALI LIBERATION FRONT (WSLF) IN OGADEN. SIAD SUSPECTS
THAT ETHIOPIANS WILL LAUNCH THEIR LONG FORMULATED
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BATTLE PLAN WHICH CALLS FOR SEIZURE LARGE CHUNK OF
SOMALI TERRITORY WHEN REVERSES IN OGADEN REACH
UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS. ACCORDING TO EGYPTIANS, SOMALI
MILITARY HAS BEEN CONVINCED FOR SOME WEEKS THAT ETHIOPIANS PLAN TO
BY PASS OGADEN AND INVADE SOMALIA IN HARGEISA AREA
AND STRIKE FOR THE SEA. EGYPTIANS CLAIM SECONDARY PLAN CALLS
FOR INVASION IN GALCAIO REGION WITH GOAL OF CUTTING SOMALIA
IN TWO.

4. SIAD'S PROBLEM IS THAT IF ETHIOPIANS DO MANGE
TO SEIZE A PARCEL OF SOMALI TERRITORY AND CANNOT BE
DISLODGED, THEN INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE CRISIS
MIGHT FORCE HIM EITHER THROUGH THE UN OR THE OAU TO
RETREAT FROM THE OGADEN FRONT, THUS LOSING AN OPPORTUNITY WHICH
PROBABLY WON'T COME AGAIN IN HIS POLITICAL LIFETIME.

5. SO IN ADDITION TO MILITARY SUPPORT AGAINST
ETHIOPIAN THREAT, SIAD WANTS THE DEFENSIVE SECURITY
TO PURSUE HIS IRREDENTIST GOALS IN THE OGADEN, AS
WELL AS THE ARMS TO GUARANTEE HIS VICTORY SHOULD THE
OGADEN INSURGENCY SUCCEED. WHILE HE IS NEGOTIATING
THAT SUPPORT, SOVIET MILITARY ASSISTANCE WILL CONTINUE.

WE MIGHT ALSO KEEP IN MIND THAT A SIZEABLE SOVIET PRESENCE IN SOMALIA GIVES SIAD VERY MINIMAL SECURITY AGAINST ETHIOPIAN ATTACK, SINCE SO LONG AS THE SOVIETS MAINTAIN THEIR POSITION IN SOMALIA AND BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN MANAGE THEIR DUAL-SUPPORT DILEMMA IN THE HORN, THEY MAY COUNSEL CAUTION IN ETHIOPIA.

6. WHAT I BELIEVE THEREFORE IS THAT SIAD'S SITUATION VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION IS STILL QUITE FLUID. NOTWITHSTANDING OUR DECISION TO HELP SUPPLY SIAD WITH DEFENSIVE ARMS, I DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE SITUATION EITHER IN SOMALIA OR ETHIOPIA HAS SO CRYSTALIZED AS TO LEAVE SIAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO DISPENSE WITH HIS SOVIET DEPENDENCY. IN OTHER WORDS, I DON'T BELIEVE
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THAT EITHER SOMALIA OR THE SOVIET UNION HAS YET CONCLUDED THAT THEIR DIFFERENCES ARE IRRECONCILABLE AND A BREAK UNAVOIDABLE. THE OPTIONS REMAIN OPEN.

7. I BELIEVE ALSO THAT SIAD HAS NEVER RECONCILED HIMSELF TO THE PERMANENCE OF THE SOVIET ROLE IN ETHIOPIA. I SUSPECT THAT SIAD HAS ALWAYS HOPED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD RECOGNIZE THE FOLLY OF THEIR ETHIOPIAN VENTURE. HIS GUERRILLA EFFORTS IN OGADEN, IF NOT HIS POLITICAL PURPOSE, HAVE BEEN TO STEADILY INCREASE THE FRAGILITY OF THE MENGISTU REGIME. HE HAS HOPED THAT MOSCOW AS RESULT MIGHT RENOUNCE ITS SUPPORT FOR MENGISTU. THIS HAS NOT YET HAPPENED. YET WE SHOULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SIAD'S APPEAL TO THE WEST FOR ARMS MAY BE INTENDED TO SERVE FINAL NOTICE TO THE RUSSIANS THAT SIAD IS NOW SERIOUSLY PURSUING AN ALTERNATIVE TO SOVIET SUPPORT -- WITH SOME SUCCESS -- THUS GIVING THE SOVIETS A LAST OPPORTUNITY TO RECONSIDER THEIR POLICY IN HORN BEFORE THOSE DIFFERENCES DO BECOME IRRECONCILABLE.

8. SIMILARLY, WE SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER POSSIBLE SIAD HOPE THAT THE PACE OF ETHIOPIAN DISINTEGRATION WOULD OUTRUN THE SOVIET ABILITY TO SALVAGE IT, THUS GIVING SIAD WHAT HE WANTED IN OGADEN WHILE MAKING IT UNNECESSARY FOR HIM TO SEVER HIS SOVIET TIES. HIS HOPE FOR ETHIOPIAN COLLAPSE BEFORE HE HAS CHANGED MILITARY HORSES MAY STILL HOLD TRUE.

9. GIVEN FLUIDITY OF SITUATION AND OPTIONS STILL AVAILABLE TO SIAD, WE SHOULD TAKE A CAREFUL LOOK AT OUR ABILITY TO TRULY SATISFY SIAD'S SECURITY NEEDS. WHAT ARE CHANCES, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT SIAD WILL FEEL SUFFICIENTLY SECURE AS RESULT OF US MILITARY SUPPORT, TOGETHER WITH HELP FROM IRAN, SAUDI ARABIA, FRANCE, UK, ETC., TO ACTUALLY END HIS MILITARY
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DEPENDENCE UPON USSR?

10. THOSE CHANCES ARE PROBLEMATIC. AT PRESENT SOMALIA'S DEFENSIVE NEEDS ARE INDISSOLUABLY LINKED TO SOMALI ACTIVITIES IN OGGADEN. IN MY TALK WITH AMBASSADOR ADDOU ON JULY 22, I POINTED OUT THAT A BASIC PROBLEM WHICH CONFRONTS US IN ANY MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMALIA IS QUESTION OF SOMALI IRREDENTISM. I SAID THE INCREASING EVIDENCE THAT SOMALI NATIONAL ARMY REGULARS ARE UTILIZED AS BONA FIDE WSLF FORCES RAISES CONSIDERABLE SUSPICIONS ON GENUINENESS OF SIAD'S OFT-STATED POLICY THAT HE WILL NEVER USE SNA TO RECOVER LOST TERRITORIES. THIS IS BASIC ISSUE WHICH HAS FRACTURED -- BUT NOT BROKEN -- SOMALI-SOVIET RELATIONS. ANY MILITARY SUPPLY SUCCESSOR(S) TO SOVIETS IN SOMALIA WILL INHERIT SAME PROBLEM. SINCE SOMALIA'S DEFENSIVE NEEDS WILL CONTINUE TO BE DERIVED FROM ITS MILITARY AND POLITICAL COMMITMENT TO OGGADEN INSURGENCY, WHAT SIAD WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SEEK IS OPEN-ENDED MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WHICH WILL PROTECT HIS BORDERS AND YET CONTINUE TO UNDERWRITE HIS AMBITIONS IN OGGADEN AND TO GUARANTEE HIS VICTORIES SHOULD HE SUCCEED. FOR THIS REASON, I AM DEEPLY SKEPTICAL THAT US CAN BE AS FORTHCOMING OR AS GENEROUS AS SIAD WILL DEMAND. FOR THAT REASON TOO, I VIEW WITH SAME SKEPTICISM SIAD'S COMMITMENT TO END HIS SOVIET TIES. WE SHOULD KEEP THIS IN MIND AS WE BEGIN TO STUDY HOW WE CAN HELP MEET HIS MILITARY NEEDS.

LOUGHRAN.

UNQUOTE VANCE.

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